

March '88

Bruce's 'Tunnel' tour picks up steam

By Edna Gundersen
USA TODAY

Bruce Springsteen will barrel through the *Tunnel of Love* starting Feb. 25, when he takes a full-tilt rock 'n' roll show across the USA.

The *Tunnel of Love Express* tour starts in Worcester, Mass.; 20 shows run through April 5. More dates will be announced soon.

6.2.88

Ticket prices and sales dates are not available yet; they'll be announced locally.

Fans anticipating the subdued and sobering atmosphere of his *Tunnel of Love* LP are in for a surprise. Springsteen is expected to deliver a career-spanning repertoire, as well as juiced-up versions of *Tunnel's* midtempo rockers and melancholy ballads.

He'll be backed throughout

the show by the entire E Street Band and a newly acquired five-piece horn section plucked primarily from the New Jersey group La Bamba and the Hubcaps.

The eagerly awaited tour begins two days after Michael Jackson's similarly hyped kickoff in Kansas City, Mo. Springsteen's schedule leaves him free to perform on the Grammy awards telecast March 2,

but he has not confirmed an appearance.

Tunnel, Springsteen's fourth No. 1 album in 10 years, has sold more than 5 million copies worldwide since October. A third single, *One Step Up* — its flip side *Roulette* is not on the LP — will be released Feb. 16.

The large backup group dispels rumors that Springsteen is planning an acoustic solo tour based on the spare arrangements and anguished lyrics on *Tunnel of Love*.

But the Express won't be a clone of his 1985 stadium sell-outs. There should be new and obscure material and some noteworthy absences, including the last tour's anthem, *Born in the U.S.A.*

Tour dates announced so far: Worcester, Mass., the Centrum, Feb. 25, 28-29; Chapel Hill, N.C., Dean Smith Auditorium, March 3-4; Philadelphia, the Spectrum, March 8-9; Cleveland, Richfield Coliseum, March 13-14.

Also: Chicago's Rosemont Horizon, March 16-17; Atlanta's Omni, March 22-23; Lexington, Ky., Rupp Arena, March 26.

Other dates: Detroit's Joe Louis Arena, March 28-29; the



SPRINGSTEEN: He'll open Feb. 25 in Worcester, Mass. — with the E Street Band.

Nassau Coliseum in Uniondale, N.Y., April 1-2; and the Capital Centre in Landover, Md., April 4-5.

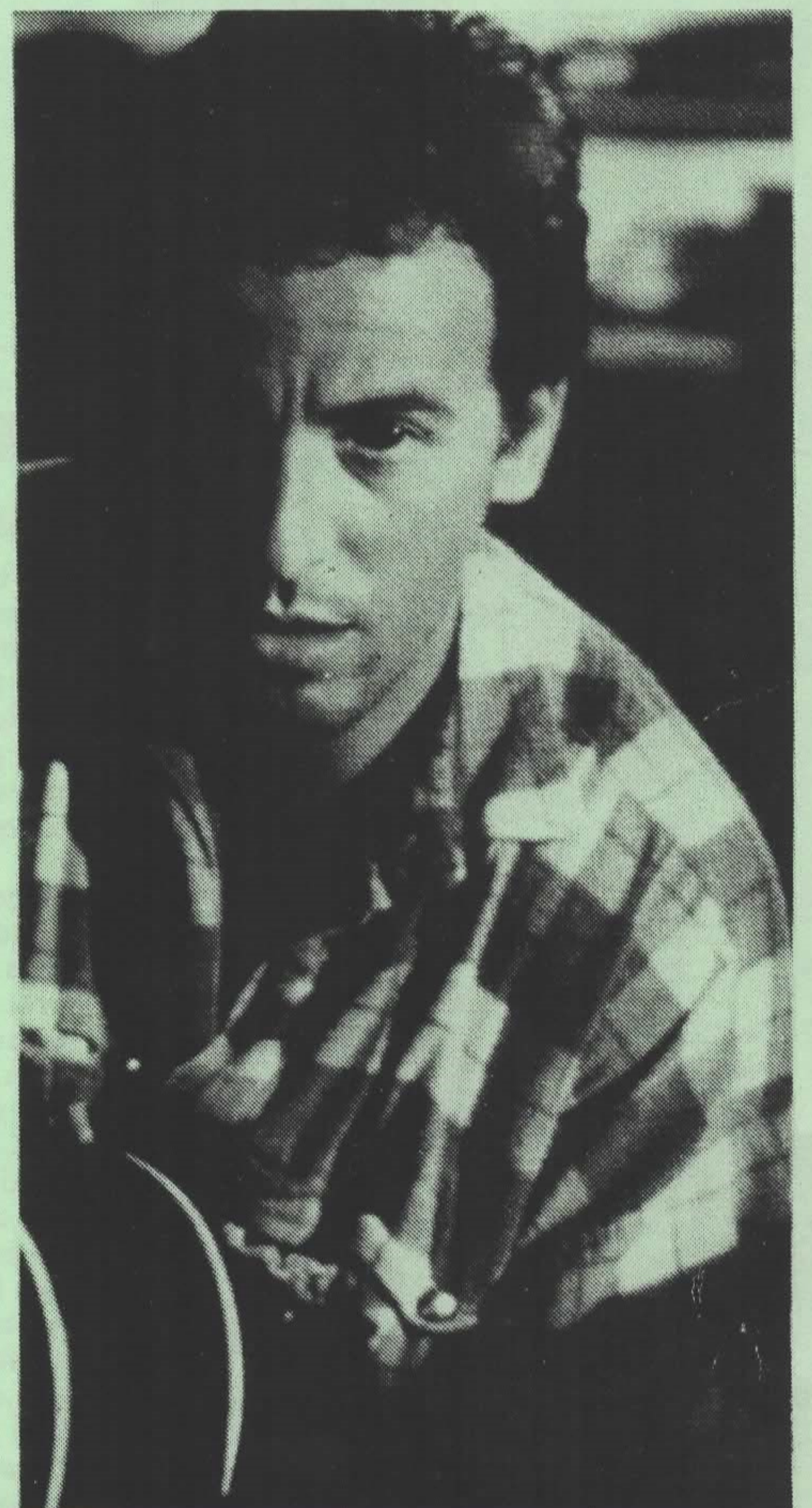
Fasten your seatbelts ...

The new expanded E Street Band have been rehearsing for the first leg of the tour in Long Branch, NJ. As well as the five-piece horn section (Mark Pender, Ed Manion, Mike Spengler, Mario Cruz and Richie 'La Bamba' Rosenberg) the line-up will include a string section and possibly a second backing vocalist — bringing the total to around 16 people!

The rehearsals have included some 'unusual' cover versions, a reworked 'Tunnel Of Love', acoustic versions of 'No Surrender' and 'Born To Run', material from Bruce's first four LPs including 'Saint In The City', 'E Street Shuffle', 'Incident On 57th Street', 'Kitty's Back', 'New York City Serenade', and the never before performed 'The Angel', and at least one new song.

The US tour itinerary has grown from 22 to 28 cities, with tickets being announced about three weeks in advance of each show, on average. Ticket sales have been by personal application and telephone credit card booking (within regional limits), restricted at least initially to two tickets per person in view of the relatively small seating numbers (10 - 20,000) and to reduce ticket scalping.

Tickets for the first three Worcester shows were announced on local radio WAAS at 7 am on 5 February. Hundreds were at the Centrum by 7.05 am despite no ticket sale date being mentioned. People were sent away with numbered wrist bands, and the tickets were all sold in two hours on 13 February (34,000 in all). Chapel Hill tickets sold out soon after.



P.T.O.

SHOWTIME: STEP RIGHT UP

Bruce's wild ride on the Express-way of Love

WORCESTER, Mass. — Armed with a mixed bag of songs and moods, Bruce Springsteen finds the light in his Tunnel of Love Express Tour, launched Thursday at the Centrum, performed to a third sell-out Monday.

If it's a joy ride you're after, he's the one. Despite an absence of staples like *Thunder Road* and *Badlands*, 16,900 spectators were as bewitched as they were bewildered by Springsteen's clear departure from pop demigod.

The show opens on a light note. E Streeters emerge to buy a ride from a carnival barker behind a ticket booth. Springsteen arrives last, in silver-tipped boots, black jeans and a satin vest over a white dress shirt. He tosses a bouquet of roses to the crowd and yells, "Ready for a date?"

And off to the circus he goes, breathing fire in one ring, clowning in the next and taking

MUSIC USA TODAY

BY EDNA GUNDERSEN

a few strolls on the high wire. The festive atmosphere belies a serious undertaking: to shed *Born in the U.S.A.*'s shackles of sainthood and hit machinery. On this three-hour merry-go-round, Springsteen succeeds in reinforcing integrity without yielding momentum.

He reaches deep into his catalog for rare B-sides like 1981's charming *Be True* and *Roulette*'s thunderous nuclear protest, and plunges into *Tunnel*'s dark corners eight times.

Humor and bone-rattling rock 'n' roll take charge in the second set. Springsteen and Clarence Clemons reminisce about singlehood before storming into the rockabilly treat, *You Can Look (But You Better Not Touch)*. The Boss mocks TV evangelism in a feverish sermon that precedes Coward.

He premieres a waggish *Part Man, Part Monkey*, does Elvis proud in *Can't Help Falling in Love* and crushes Joan Jett's rendition of his *Light of Day*. The concert closes with a fusillade of *Rosalita* and the Detroit Wheels medley.

The night's fireworks are staggering, but it is a calculated lull that stole the show: a stirring, acoustic re-invention of *Born to Run*, the blistering anthem that once roared independence. Now it seethes a more contemplative urgency.

The band is typically unfaltering, with a five-piece horn section pumping new life into classics. Patty Scialfa's higher profile and shimmering vocals give *Tunnel*'s tales a luscious feminine charge.

Plainly delighted to be back on stage, Springsteen's euphoria matches the crowd's. "It's good to see you again!" he tells the glory-dazed. "Missed you!" Likewise.



By Barbara Kinney, USA TODAY
REBORN IN THE USA: The Boss launched his tour Thursday in Worcester, Mass., with horns, hoopla and a quiet 'Born to Run.'

1-3-88



Springsteen: born to tour

PRESTON—OUTLINE



TIME 7-3-88

He opened the show by pretending to pay admission at a carnival ticket booth, but even fans who shelled out \$300 for their seats seemed to think they got their money's worth last week as **Bruce Springsteen** kicked off his Tunnel of Love tour. "Good to see ya again!" the Boss shouted to the roaring crowd of 13,000 in Worcester, Mass. "I missed ya." And vice versa. The 20-city tour is the singer's first in nearly 2½ years, and despite the low-key tone of his *Tunnel of Love* album, the three-hour set showcased Springsteen's hard-rocking side. Backed by the E Street Band and a new five-man horn section, the Boss delivered rollicking renditions of old favorites like *Born in the U.S.A.* and two new songs, *Part Man, Part Monkey* and *I'm a Coward When It Comes to Love*. Said a joyous Springsteen: "I forgot how much work this is." Not to mention how much fun.

—By Guy D. Garcia

NEWSWEEK/MARCH 7, 1988



PAUL NATKIN—PHOTO RESERVE

'I forgot how much work this is': 'Broooooce'

ONE STEP UP! 'ROULETTE' US 45 STEVE

The loudest noise ever recorded in Worcester, Massachusetts, was heard last Thursday night. It sounded like this—"BROOOOOCE"—and it filled the air as Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band took the stage of the Centrum to kick off their first tour in two and a half years. There were questions in the air, too: could Springsteen deliver the spare, thoughtful material from his "Tunnel of Love" album on an arena stage? Could he mix it up with older, louder stuff in a coherent concert? Yes, and yes again. The first show on the "Tunnel of Love Express" tour reaffirmed Springsteen's hard-won reputation as the best showman in rock and roll—a performer who moves hearts, minds and feet.

Eight songs from "Tunnel of Love" held the center of the three-and-a-half hour, 28-song show. Springsteen introduced "Spare Parts" with a story about returning to the street he had lived on as a kid. It hadn't changed, but he had: "I knew that street wasn't mine anymore." The message may have seemed familiar: keep moving on. But it wasn't really that simple. Later, in a surprising way, he completed the thought: keep moving, but don't be afraid to pull off the road when you find what you've been looking for. "When I was 24 years old I wrote this song," he said, strumming an acoustic guitar. "It's about a guy and a girl who wanted to run and keep on running. It was my song. But as I got older I realized I didn't want it to be. I wanted to make a home for myself." And he launched into a solo "Born to Run" that was sweet and affectionate, like he was telling it goodbye.

That desire to confound expectations ran through the show like a lifeline. Several songs were recast—"Dancing in the Dark" got new muscle from Nils Lofgren's rumbling guitar, and "You Can Look But You Better Not Touch" benefited from a rhythmic reshuffling. There were two sharp new songs on opening night—"Part Man Part Monkey," a reggae slither, and "Coward When It Comes to Love," an R&B stomp—and a ballistic version of "Light of Day." By the time the band ripped through a medley beginning and ending with "Devil With a Blue Dress On" it was near midnight and time to go. "I forgot how much work this is," Springsteen told the audience, adding almost to himself: "It's fun too." The crowd tumbled out into the street, taking with it the best rock and roll has to offer: memories to dance to and a message to ponder.

BILL BAROL in Worcester